

## **APPROACHING LOCAL/STATE OFFICIALS**

Write to your local officials and state representatives to encourage their support of Celiac Disease Awareness Month. A sample letter on page 11 is available for your use. **Send these letters in August or September to coincide with other awareness month publicity.**

### **CSA CELIAC DISEASE AWARENESS MONTH PROCLAMATION PROMOTION**

A generic sample of a Celiac Disease Awareness Month proclamation is shown on page 12.

The idea of an official proclamation is not a new one, but very popular. Many local chapters and individual members can use this sample for their own community, county, parish or designated area.

Any Celiac Disease Awareness national resolutions and proclamations will be handled by the national office. All proposed state resolutions or proclamations should be coordinated with the national office, to avoid duplication, and to make sure that everyone is included in the promotion process.

Please send any photos or news publicity using a proclamation to the CSA national office for use on the website as well as in *Lifeline*. Contact CSA by mail at: PO Box 31700, Omaha, NE 68131, or by email at [celiacs@csaceliacs.org](mailto:celiacs@csaceliacs.org).

Date

The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_  
Office Building  
City, State, Zip

Senator / Representative / Mr. / Mrs. / Ms. \_\_\_\_\_:

As one of your constituents, I would like to bring to your attention that October is National Celiac Disease Awareness Month. I am calling for measures to promote the earlier diagnosis of celiac disease.

As you are probably aware, celiac disease is an autoimmune disease caused by the reaction to gluten, the protein fractions found in wheat, barley, rye and oats. It is one of the most common lifelong disorders in the USA. There is no cure; the only reliable treatment is a strict lifelong diet free of wheat, barley, rye and oats. Celiac disease affects as many as 1 in 130 Americans, but nearly five out of six people are undiagnosed. In fact, an average of three individuals is born every minute with a genetic predisposition to celiac disease.

Celiac disease has a myriad of symptoms which can vary greatly; as a result the disease often goes unrecognized for years. Left untreated, it can result in chronic ill health and susceptibility to complications such as osteoporosis, infertility, other auto-immune diseases and an increased risk of malignancy, particularly lymphoma. Healthcare costs per untreated celiac in the United States range from \$5,000-\$12,000 annually, and total healthcare costs for all untreated Celiacs in the United States can approach \$34 billion each year.

The Celiac Sprue Association (CSA) is currently coordinating an Awareness Month under the campaign banner "2.5 Born Every Minute" to draw attention to the need for early diagnosis. CSA, the largest celiac disease patient support organization in the United States, has the support of its membership to promote awareness of celiac disease.

I hope that you will add your name to this Celiac Disease Awareness Month proclamation to help raise awareness of this widespread but still largely unknown disease.

Sincerely yours,

Chapter Contact Information  
CC: Celiac Sprue Association (CSA)  
Toll Free: 877-CSA-4-CSA  
[www.csaceliacs.org](http://www.csaceliacs.org)

## Proclamation for Celiac Awareness

**Whereas**, *Celiac Disease, also known as Celiac Sprue, is an autoimmune disorder that affects as many as one in every 130 Americans;*

**Whereas**, *Every minute approximately three children are born with a genetic predisposition for celiac disease;*

**Whereas**, *Celiac Disease, a reaction to the ingestion of gluten, a storage protein found in wheat, barley, rye, oats and their derivatives, damages the lining of the small intestine preventing the proper absorption of nutrients into the body;*

**Whereas**, *some of the symptoms of Celiac Disease include fatigue, anemia, headache, and gastrointestinal distress;*

**Whereas**, *the disease was first described in the second century but the cause and treatment were not described in medical records until the twentieth century;*

**Whereas**, *Celiac Disease covers a wide spectrum of physical, neurological, and immunological conditions;*

**Whereas**, *the inconsistent, mysterious and mimicking nature of Celiac Disease makes it a diagnostic puzzle;*

**Whereas**, *the Celiac Sprue Association is the largest member-based non-profit organization helping the celiac community in North America;*

**Whereas**, \_\_\_\_\_ *is a Chapter of the Celiac Sprue Association, with their national headquarters in Omaha, Nebraska, and with all its affiliates have made tremendous strides in raising public awareness of Celiac Disease; and;*

**Whereas**, *2009 marks the beginning of the fourth decade for the Celiac Sprue Association, and;*

**Therefore, I**, \_\_\_\_\_, *do hereby proclaim*

\_\_\_\_\_, **2009 as “Celiac Disease Awareness Month”**

**In Witness Whereof**, *I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of \_\_\_\_\_ to be affixed.*

*Done at \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_ this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ in the Year of Our Lord two thousand nine.*